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"WHEN FOE MEETS FOE."

IDA WHIPPLE BENHAM.

When foe meets foe upon the field of strife,
When hate meets hate, what power but hate shall win?
Shall love complete what passion doth begin?
Shall wisdom dwell on the avenger's knife?
Or is the murderous blade with reason rife
To deal conviction where it enters in?
Or bears the stinging bullet cure for sin?
Or points the bayonet the way of life?

O sons of men! wrought in the heavenly mould,
Endowed with godlike gifts, reason and ruth,
Strong to endure, and noble to achieve!
What strange fatuity is this ye hold
Ye who distrust the power of love and truth,
Yet in the sword's arbitrament believe!

WHITTIER'S BIRTHDAY.

Father of song, of tenderness and grace,
Whose power from the Almighty Hand was given
To aid in freeing a down-trodden race,
Whose Quaker verses were inspired from Heaven,
I prize this volume as a Christmas token
Far more than words by careless mortals spoken.
If when thou cast thy mantle on Earth's shore,
And millions mourn that Whittier is no more,
I tarry here to breast the storms of time
New hope will come from thy sweet words in rhyme
And through the turmoil of unceasing strife,
Which haunts the path of every human life,
A bow of promise from thy songs will shine,
For every one who reads these works of thine.

—Wm. G. Soule.

It was a dull, gray morning at Oak Knoll, with the sullen storm wrack rolling steadily in across the sky, and the northeast wind sending the brown oak leaves whirling merrily round and round in the gutters to fly dancing off far and away over the brown turf. And yet, in spite of the cold, gray day, there was a fascination about it, too, and an exhilarating pleasure in the walk over the ice-covered road —

"Winding along as old roads will" —

under the thickly interlaced branches of the sturdy trees that line the way up from the little brown station at Beaver Brook. The keen, frosty air sent a glow in the cheeks as the wayfarer mounted the steep rise past the old place from whence Sara Osborn, the witch of 1692, pursued by the avarice of her second husband, was brought to the gaol and the tree at Gallows Hill by Sheriff Corwin, and past the quiet tarn lying far below the road, nestling in the hollows at the foot of the knoll, its mirror-like surface unmarred by the skater, rivalling the high polish of the finest plate of France, and reflecting back to the observer the winter picture above its edges.

When the hospitable door had opened wide and the visitor had been welcomed he found everything as bright, cheery and homelike as ever in this pleasant household. Mr. Whittier was passing his eighty-third birthday and entering upon his eighty-fourth year very quietly, as he desired it. Though up and about he is not strong this winter, and did not feel himself equal to the task of the customary reception and interviewing. So as it was not "a regular" birthday celebration, the usual birthday cake for the guests' table was not made this year, but Mr. Charles F. Coffin of Lynn remembered the occasion with his usual magnificent basket of fruit, piled high

with the most delicious products of the hot-house and the tropics. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. sent Mr. Whittier a basket of most exquisite flowers — superb orchids, lovely chrysanthemums, tube roses and a rare and lovely purple flower, familiar to the family, who remembered it as associated with delightful memories of Bermuda.

There were other remembrances from personal friends. In accordance with Mr. Whittier's expressed desire, his callers were limited to the more intimate of his friends. He received a very voluminous mail, but none of the letters were opened yesterday. They will be reserved for many a leisure moment later on.

Mr. Whittier rose at his accustomed hour, but dined early, to be prepared for those friends who should call during the afternoon. Mrs. James T. Field was his guest at dinner, and there were family relatives present. Among the early callers were Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Coffin, Mr. and Mrs. Cartland of Newburyport, and one or two of Mr. Whittier's near neighbors, who dropped in to tender their best wishes for renewed health and strength and to grasp his hand in the honest, cordial fashion of the country side.

Mr. Whittier will probably remain at Oak Knoll through the winter, in company with his constant and faithful companion, Robin Adair, a noble specimen of the Highland shepherd dog.

Mr. Whittier said to a visitor, in a laughing way, that he was foolish enough last winter to follow the fashion and indulge in la grippe, since when he had not felt as well.

Mr. Whittier's birthday was observed by exercises in many schools and literary clubs throughout the country. Each year as it passes adds to the love and admiration felt for the man and the poet. His latest poem, published by us last week, is one of the sweetest he has ever written. The poems he has composed within the past year or two have just been collected in a little volume for private circulation, entitled "At Sundown." They include several that must add to his literary reputation, such as "The Drift-Wood Fire," "The Vow of Washington," and "The Last Eve of Summer." We prefix a tribute to the poet, written several years ago by a gentleman of this city on the fly-leaf of Whittier's works, received by him as a Christmas present.—Portland (Me.) Transcript.

A FORMER SECRETARY.

George Cone Beckwith was born in Granville, N. Y., Jan. 3, 1801, and died in Boston, Mass., May 12, 1870, aged sixty-nine years, four months and nine days. He graduated at Middlebury College, Vermont, 1822, and at Andover Theological Seminary 1826. He was ordained a minister of the Gospel July 18, 1827, and was the pastor of the First Congregational Church, Lowell, Mass., about two years. He was professor of sacred literature in Lane Theological Seminary, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1829-30; instructor in sacred rhetoric, Andover Seminary, 1831-2. He was pastor of the High St. Congregational Church, Portland, Me., 1832-4; agent of the American Peace Society 1835-7; corresponding secretary 1837 till his death in 1870 — thirty-three years.

—The Venezuelan Government has requested the mediation of the United States, to settle the disputed boundary between Venezuela and British Guiana.